

**THE NORTH HAVEN BOARD OF EDUCATION
5 LINSLEY STREET
NORTH HAVEN, CT 06473**

MINUTES

January 7, 2014

Attendance: Robert D. Cronin, Ph.D., Kristine Carling, Director of Finance and Operations, Melinda McKenna, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Planning, Dana Corriveau, Director of Special Education, Wesley O'Brien, Jennifer Cecarelli, Goldie Adele, Randi Petersen, Alicia Clapp, Matthew Kerzner, Jennifer Caldwell, and Bryan Bogen.

1. Budget Workshop

Dr. Cronin reported that the administrators at Central Office began working on budget in October 2013. Preliminary information was given to building administrators in October and November. In December, 2013, Bob, Kristine and Melinda met the building administrators in December to review their requests.

Tonight Dr. Cronin is bringing that information to the Board of Education.

Dr. Cronin gave a power point presentation which focused on the following:

- Budget priorities
- Information Guiding Decisions
- Guiding Questions
- Elementary Positions to Consider
- Middle and High School Positions to consider
- Enrollment numbers at elementary schools

Mr. Freda spoke to the Board of Education regarding the 5-year plan that he has been a part of with the administration, teachers union, and Board Chair. This committee was formed to plan out what the districts needs were and how to accomplish phasing in these needs over the next five years.

Mr. Freda stated that the dilemma this year is that this year there is going to be a May referendum on the budget (the Town and the Board of Education) that is going to take place one month before another referendum on a 50 million dollar Middle School Project. Mr. Freda said the first public meeting on the Middle School will be Tuesday, January 28, 2014 at the North Haven Middle School. The Building Committee is going to report what their findings are and what option they would like to bring forward to the public. Mr. Freda stated that one of two things could happen and that would be either the budget could get shot down in May because the public is going to know about the 50 million dollar project in June OR the budget could pass in May and the Middle School project could get shot down in June. Mr. Freda stated that he doesn't know if we could afford for either of them to fail. Mr. Freda has mapped out some goals for the referendum in May to include:

- No tax increase in May, a senior citizen tax freeze, and a veterans exemptions on property tax.
- Mr. Freda feels this will help pass the referendum on the Middle School Project. Mr. Freda stated that he is confident on the Town side that he can hold the line through a series of cost savings they have been working on. Mr. Freda questioned how we accomplish these things:

a. No tax increase in May

- b. Senior tax freeze prior to the May referendum
- c. Veterans exemption
- d. Provide an increase for education for the May referendum
- e. Pass a referendum for the Middle School in June

Mr. Freda suggests keeping all of these things in mind when building your 2014-2015 Board of Education budget. Mr. Freda stated there may be some ways the Town can help out the Board of Education save on insurance costs as well as legal fees by sharing what they have been doing to cut costs.

Dr. Cronin added that they can only apply for State reimbursements on building projects in June, therefore if we do not apply prior to June 30, 2014, it will be another year before we can submit our application, which means the possibility of reimbursement rates changing and losing money, not to mention working in a decrepit school for another year.

The Board spent the remainder of the evening discussing enrollment numbers in the elementary schools and trying to project the enrollment for the 2014-2015 school year to help determine how many certified teachers would be needed. Dr. Cronin would like to get some class size guidelines in place, as that can become an issue when deciding about faculty. There was some discussion regarding the Open Choice Program and for North Haven to continue that program, focusing on starting those students at the elementary level, beginning in kindergarten or first grade. There was also discussion regarding the Art and Music Program. Dr. Cronin stated that there are some one year contracts currently for one music teacher and one art teacher that need to be reviewed. Dr. Cronin also stated that the ID Program needs to be reviewed as well, focusing on how many classes there are to be housed at both Green Acres and Ridge Road.

The Board of Education decided to continue their discussion Thursday evening and hold an additional Budget Workshop immediately following the regular Board of Education Meeting. Dr. Cronin asked the Board to think about the following:

- What are our priorities
- Class size guidelines
- Art and Music at the elementary level
- ID Classes
- Gaining public support

NO PUBLIC COMMENTS